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be divided into something like natural diseases and supernatural ones. The latter are called *vila* diseases, 'treacherous' (*neverne*) diseases, and diseases 'put on' (*nametnute*) by magic or the evil eye.

If one goes outside at night in an evil hour, or makes water at night in an unclean place (he should as a safeguard spit first three times) and after he fall ill, he is said to have come upon evil (*uradisal*). The cure at Libjahovo is to wash him with unbroken water and throw the water outside the house saying: 'From the dung heap you came, to the dunghill return, gentle and honied ones.' Or else let the unfortunate man take a cake smeared with honey and put it on the place where he thinks that he caught the disease to *appease the 'urama'*.[1] Such offerings are to be made should one urinate under an old rose bush or any other tree, and afterwards be troubled by pains in the back and head and legs. In the Nišava district for this kind of disease (*ogradisanje*), the woman doctor (*bajalica*) sprinkles the place with sherbet on a sprig of hyssop, and at the same time beseeches those who have sent the illness to remove it *in return for this rich gift*.[2] Honey or honey water is the usual libation, and honey is one of the traditional offerings to the *vile*.

Namera is used rather in the same sense, as well as to signify an ill-wished misfortune or an evil eye. Diagnosis of these diseases can be made from the clothes worn by the patient when he caught it, or by bringing certain things—flowers, nails, horseshoes, a glass of wine, water, salt, and food—either to the spot in question or to trees commonly associated with spirits, such as roses, blackthorns, willows, etc. A prayer is generally addressed to the spirits or to the tree. It is common to leave the offerings over night, and if the next day they have been in any way disturbed, a leaf fallen into the wine or what not, it is clear that the man has been enchanted. The offerings can serve afterwards as a medicine.

Distinguished from ill-wishing and spell casting in the

[1] Cf. S.E.Z. XII, p. 445; Sb.N.U. (1926), p. 162; Gl.Z.M. p. 387.
[2] V. M. Nikolić, *Iz Lužnice i Nišave* (1910), p. 278.

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after a new moon. Miličević speaks of ploughing round a village, twins driving twin black oxen. More recently the same method of circular ploughing has been observed in Croatia. In Montenegro, in the case of cattle epidemics, the beasts were all driven to pasture. Two brothers born in succession ploughed a circular furrow with two pair of oxen, also born in succession, starting in different directions. When the two ploughs met, the herdsmen fired their guns over the heads of the beasts who galloped home. The custom has long since died out, but it must have been common in Montenegro and in Serbia, for it is often found as a folk-memory. Miniature gold ploughs were made for this purpose near Leban. In the eastern parts of Serbia on the arrival of *čuma* (cholera?) till recently twin brothers led twin black oxen round the village. In the Drim district a more recent practice for the same purpose was performed in this way. At evening the whole community met at a deserted house, and the women, each taking their turn, wove a piece of cloth. At dawn or just before sunrise they carried this cloth in procession three times round the village, chanting '*Čuma*, do not come here, we shall bury you'; and the cloth was finally buried in the territory of another commune.[1] A protective measure in Croatia was to draw a thread spun on an Ember Wednesday round the entire homestead and estate.

Circular ploughing was known at Veles and other places in Macedonia, as a protection against plague, storms, etc., and in Western Bulgaria as a ritual necessary to secure a newly settled village. Marinov[2] explains that the rite is exceedingly rare because of the difficulty of finding twins, and his account of the ceremony would, generally speaking, have strained the patience and the resources of a community. Three concentric circles were ploughed round the village at dead of night by naked twin ploughmen (young men) driving

[1] S. Trojanović, *Glavni Srpski Žrtveni Obićaji*, pp. 35–8; cf. M. Miličević, *Život Srba Seljaka*, p. 323 *passim*. Compare also the practice of tying a length of linen round churches.

[2] In Sb.N.U. xxx.

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B 751 twin oxen not more than three years old, and no one was allowed to see the ploughmen and no one allowed to enter or leave the village. Besides that the plough had to be specially made; the wooden parts, of a tree with a double trunk from the root (twin trees), and the iron parts, of iron collected in nine different districts and forged by twin, naked smiths. It is immediately striking that the ceremonial B S [171] ploughing closely resembles that of ancient Italy: the characteristic features are the circular furrow, the twin ploughmen and the twin black oxen. The South Slavs were acquainted with ploughing presumably before they came into contact with a Romanised population in the Balkans, and similar rites existed in Russia and are still known in India. I do not S 174 know the history of the rite. Gruppe suggests that the apotropaeic purpose (in Greece) was to arouse demoniacal powers to oppose the harmful forces of certain predatory beings, and that from a general aim developed the associated cults of Demeter and Hermes, to be compared with the Etruscan mysteries.[1] Amongst the Slavs it remains a sporadic performance, never a seasonal celebration, and the ritual connected with the first ploughing of the year shows a completely different treatment, whereas the Germanic peoples know of a seasonal rite—generally on Ash Wednesday or Plough Monday. Some of the South Slavs and the Czechs, who may have been influenced by Germanic culture, also perform a similar ceremony during the spring, irrespective of immediate disC 241 asters. Krolmus says that among the Czechs at the spring sowing young men drove a naked girl harnessed to a plough with a black cat. The cat was buried alive at the end of the R furrow. This practice was known in many parts of Russia. 751 The rite, given by Tereščenko as typical of the Great 731 Russians, was for plagues. A procession of women and girls was formed, and an old woman was harnessed naked to the plough. All the women carried pots and pans with which

[1] O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte* (1906), II, pp. 894, etc. A passage in Diogenes Laertius (I, 109—H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (1922), II, p. 185) points to a sacrificial motive.

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three or five fires, while the characteristic feature of the ritual which we have been considering is the passing between two fires and through a tunnel or hoop. There are examples nearer home which are probably of more value for comparison. Among these, it may be that the little that is known of the Mediterranean cult of the Kouretes, associated with thunder and claimed by the Greeks to be the protectors of cattle, will throw light on the important part played by the twin fire makers. On the other hand, one would have to consider the fire cults of the Scythians, Sarmatians and other peoples who were in contact with the Slavs, and of whose customs we know comparatively little. Trojanović also connects circular ploughing with the fire circle, but in doing so almost flatly contradicts what he had earlier written about ploughing. He mentions an instance of a shirt woven and made in a day, as part of the paraphernalia of a need fire ceremony, which may be compared with the cloth carried round a village described above. This looks like an illustration of how ritual tends to be transferred or generalised. Trojanović also says that 'in all probability all *zavetine* arise from the day on which live fire was first produced'.[1] There is no evidence at all for this. The *zavetine* refer to every kind of need or occasion, and their origins are often distinctly remembered.

Swinging and turning may be a cure derived from, or influenced by, a seasonal ceremonial of a more general order, or part of a specific cult. The few examples that I have been able to find, either of a seasonal (spring) rite, or a special healing rite, are confined to remote, generally mountainous, parts of Serbia, Bosnia and parts of Bulgaria, and occur amongst the Kucovlahs. I have thus had the impression that to-day swinging survives amongst the pastoral people. It is sometimes particularly associated with St George's Day and the popular explanation is that it promotes health, hastens marriage or birth, or is anti-febrile. At Vidin, on the Monday before St Theodor, the dogs are swung to prevent

[1] S. Trojanović, *Vatra*, p. 169.

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B 751 Mt 751 533 madness. For lack of material I cannot draw even a preliminary conclusion. In Montenegro I was told that people swung on the branches of trees (no special kind mentioned) to prevent fever. The rare descriptions which are to be found in published material leave out details of direction and the words of songs said to accompany the rite. So far as I know these are mostly short lyrics referring to lovers swinging each other.[1]

S CM 769 751 In Homoljski district and in Macedonia, throughout the February carnival when the dead are particularly commemorated, the younger people swing for the sake of their health and that of the cattle, either on ropes or on a board swung from the horizontal branch of a tree. Each young man as a rule swings his own girl, or his sister, or the women may swing each other. A more dangerous game is to stand on planks revolving one above the other about the axis of an upright post.[2]

Mt 789 Among the shepherds and herdsmen of Montenegro, on St George's Day, the young men and girls rolled in the dew at dawn, and climbed up dogwood trees and slid down three times in succession, saying to themselves: 'My laziness and sleepiness to you, *drijen*, and to me health and beauty.' And before going away they faced the tree and said three times: '*Drijen, drijen*, I leave you my laziness (*lijen*) and sleepiness.'[3] Climbing trees may also be seen in Bosnia, and I suppose C 588 in other parts as well. The older records of mock marriage with a tree and impersonating a tree, at spring festivities localised in Dalmatia, appear to me highly sophisticated symbolism. The Serbian rite first quoted leaves an erotic S 751 [831] motive to be inferred, but I would also associate the ceremonial whipping of children with green boughs, cornel, willow, etc., which is supposed to be good for health and for S 755 laziness, and to give health and strength. Riding a beam and

[1] Cf. V. Vrčević, *op. cit.* (*Djurdjev Dan*); V. N. Čolakov, *op. cit.* pp. 36–9; I. S. Jastrebov, *op. cit.* pp. 162, 163; A. T. Iliev, *Sbornik ot narodna umotvorenija, običai*, I (1889), no. 245.

[2] S.E.Z. XIX (Feb. 28th).

[3] Cf. V. Vrčević, *op. cit.*